

CEREMONY & CELEBRATION FAMILY EDITION

Based on the teachings and writings of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks זצ"ל



ROSH HASHANAH

Rosh Hashanah in a Nutshell

The ten days that begin on Rosh Hashanah and end with Yom Kippur are the holy of holies of Jewish time.

On the *Yamim Noraim*, the Days of Awe, we can almost feel God's presence and sense His closeness. For although we know that God is *always* close to us, we do not always feel close to Him. He is always to be found, but we do not always seek Him out. The atmosphere in the synagogue is intense and serious, (and for those who are unable to experience Rosh Hashanah shul services, it is our challenge to find the spiritual energy to replicate this atmosphere in our own homes.)

On Rosh Hashanah God judges the whole world and decides on their fate for the coming year. It is as if the world has become a courtroom. God Himself is the Judge. The shofar announces that the court is in session, and we are on trial, giving an account of our lives.

If taken seriously, this is a potentially life-changing experience. It forces us to ask the most fateful questions we will ever ask:

- Who am I?
- Why am I here?
- How shall I live?
- How have I lived until now?
- How have I used God's greatest gift: time?
- Whom have I wronged, and how can I put it right?
- Where have I failed, and how shall I overcome my failures?
- What is broken in my life and needs mending?
- What chapter will I write in the Book of Life?

These are days of reflection and introspection when we stand in the presence of God and acknowledge how short and vulnerable life really is, and how little time we have here on earth.

There is no time to waste to become the very best people we can be!



Points to Ponder

1 Aren't these questions we should ask ourselves every day? Why especially now on Rosh Hashanah?

2 Does the recognition that life is short help or hinder the way you live your life?

3 Ask yourself these nine questions now. Do you have answers?

What Rosh Hashanah Says to Us

The genius of Judaism was to take eternal truths and translate them into time, into lived experiences. Other cultures have constructed philosophies and theologies, elaborate systems of abstract thought. Judaism prefers truth lived to truth merely thought. Ancient Greece produced the logical imagination. Judaism produced the chronological imagination, truth transposed into the calendar.

Rosh Hashanah, the anniversary of the creation of humanity, invites us to live and feel the human condition in graphic ways.

Here are 10 messages from Rosh Hashanah that speak directly to our lives today.

1. Life is short

However much life expectancy has risen, we will not, in one lifetime, be able to achieve everything we might wish to achieve. This life is all we have. How shall we use it well? We know that we will not finish the task, but neither are we free to stand aside from it.

REFLECT: What will you try to achieve today after reflecting on this?



Adapted from the introduction to the *Koren Rosh Hashanah Machzor* with commentary and translation by Rabbi Sacks

2. Life is a gift from God

Life itself, each day, every breath we take, is the gift of God. Life is not something we may take for granted. If we do, we will fail to celebrate it. God gives us one gift above all others, said Rambam (Maimonides): life itself, beside which everything else is secondary. Other religions have sought God in heaven, or in the afterlife, the distant past or the distant future. Here there is suffering, there reward; here chaos, there order; here pain, there balm; here poverty, there plenty. Judaism has relentlessly sought God in the here-and-now of life on earth. Yes, we believe in life after death, but it is in life before death that we truly find human greatness.

... **REFLECT:** How does understanding this change the way you are going to live?

3. We are free

Judaism is the religion of the free human being freely responding to the God of freedom. We are not in the grip of sin. We are not determined by economic forces or psychological drives or genetically encoded impulses that we are powerless to resist. The very fact that we can do *teshuvah*, that we can act differently tomorrow than we did yesterday, tells us we are free. Philosophers have found this idea difficult. So have scientists. But Judaism insists on it, and our ancestors proved it by defying every law of history, surviving against the odds, refusing to accept defeat.

... **REFLECT:** Where do we find this concept reflected in the prayers of Rosh Hashanah?

4. Life is meaningful

We are not mere accidents of matter, generated by a universe that came into being for no reason and will one day, for no reason, cease to be. We are here because a loving God brought the universe, and life, and us, into existence – a God who knows our fears, hears our prayers, believes in us more than we believe in ourselves, forgives us when we fail, lifts us when we fall and gives us the strength to overcome despair. The historian Paul Johnson once wrote: “No people has ever insisted more firmly than the Jews that history has a purpose and humanity a destiny.” He concluded: “The Jews, therefore, stand right at the centre of the perennial attempt to give human life the dignity of a

purpose.” This is one of the truths of Rosh Hashanah.

... **REFLECT:** Do you have a sense of the meaning of your life?

5. Life is not easy

Judaism does not see the world through rose-tinted lenses. The sufferings of our ancestors haunt our prayers. The world we live in is not the world as it ought to be. That is why, despite every temptation, Judaism has never been able to say the Messianic Age has come, even though we await it daily. But we are not bereft of hope because we are not alone. When Jews went into exile, the *Shechinah*, the Divine presence, went with them. God is always there, “close to all who call on Him in truth” (Tehillim 145:18). He may hide His face, but He is there. He may be silent, but He is listening to us, hearing us and healing us in ways we may not understand at the time but which become clear in retrospect.

... **REFLECT:** Does this message from Rosh Hashanah resonate with you? Can you feel God’s closeness in times of difficulty?

6. Life is still sweet

Life may be hard, but it can still be sweet, the way the challah and the apple are on Rosh Hashanah when we dip them in honey. Jews have never needed wealth to be rich, or power to be strong. To be a Jew is to live for simple things: the love between husband and wife, the sacred bond between parents and children, the gift of community where we help others and others help us and where we learn that joy is doubled and grief halved by being shared. To be a Jew is to give, whether in the form of *tzedakah* or *gemilut chasadim* (acts of loving-kindness). It is to learn and never stop seeking, to pray and never stop thanking, to do *teshuvah* and never stop growing. In this lies the secret of joy. Throughout history there have been hedonistic cultures that worship pleasure and ascetic cultures that deny it, but Judaism has a different approach altogether: to sanctify pleasure by making it part of the worship of God. Life is sweet when touched by the Divine.

... **REFLECT:** Where is the sweetness in your life?



Life may be hard, but it can still be sweet, the way the challah and the apple are on Rosh Hashanah when we dip them in honey.

7. Our life is a work of art

Our life is the single greatest work of art we will ever make. Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, in one of his earliest works, spoke about *Ish Hahalachah*, the halachic personality and its longing to create, to make something new, original. God too longs for us to create and thereby become His partner in the work of renewal. "The most fundamental principle of all is that man must create himself." That is what *teshuvah* is, an act of making ourselves anew. On Rosh Hashanah we step back from our life like an artist stepping back from their canvas, seeing what needs changing for the painting to be complete.

REFLECT: If you were going to create an expression of your life using any medium (e.g. visual art, poetry, prose, music, etc.) how would you do it?

8. We are what we are because of those who came before us

Our lives are not disconnected particles. We are each a letter in God's Book of Life. But single letters, though they are the vehicles of meaning, have no meaning when they stand alone. To have meaning they must be joined to other letters to make words, sentences, paragraphs, a story, and to be a Jew is to be part of the strangest, oldest, most unexpected and counterintuitive story there has ever been: the story of a tiny people, never large and often homeless, who nonetheless outlived the greatest empires the world has ever known – the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans, the medieval empires of Christianity and Islam, all the way to the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. Each in turn thought itself immortal. Each has gone. The Jewish people still lives. But we do not start with nothing. We have inherited wealth, not material but spiritual. We are heirs to our ancestors' greatness.

REFLECT: Think of all the ways your life has been enriched by your parents, grandparents, and great grandparents (and beyond).

9. Judaism asks great things of us and by doing so makes us great.

We walk as tall as the ideals for which we live, and those of the Torah are very high indeed. We are, said Moshe, God's children

(Devarim 14:1). We are called on, said the prophet Yishayahu, to be His witnesses, His ambassadors on earth (Yishayahu 43:10).

Time and again Jews did things thought impossible. They battled against might in the name of right. They fought against slavery. They showed that it was possible to be a nation without a land, to have influence without power, to be branded the world's pariahs yet not lose self-respect. They believed with unshakeable conviction that they would one day return to their land, and though the hope seemed absurd, it happened.

Judaism sets the bar high, and though we may fall short time and again, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur allow us to begin anew, forgiven, cleansed, undaunted, ready for the next challenge, the next year.

REFLECT: What do you think Judaism is asking of you in your life?

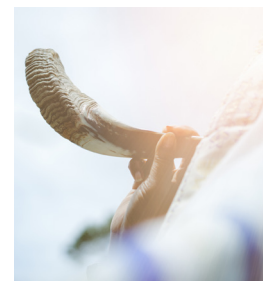
10. We are dust of the earth but within us is the breath of God

And finally comes the sound of the shofar, piercing our defences, a wordless cry in a religion of words, a sound produced by breath as if to tell us that that is all life is – a mere breath – yet breath is nothing less than the spirit of God within us: "Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being" (Bereishit 2:7).

And whether the shofar is our cry to God or God's cry to us, somehow in that *tekiah*, *shevarim*, *teruah* – the call, the sob, the wail – is all the emotion of the Divine-human encounter as God asks us to take His gift, life itself, and make of it something holy, by so acting as to honour God and His image on earth, humankind.

For we defeat death, not by living forever but by living by values that live forever; by doing deeds and creating blessings that will live on after us, and by attaching ourselves in the midst of time to God who lives beyond time, "the King – the living, everlasting God."

REFLECT: Close your eyes and hear the shofar. What is it saying to you? What do you want it to say to God on your behalf?



And finally comes the sound of the shofar... a wordless cry in a religion of words.

Deep Diving into the Tefillah of the Day: Unetaneh Tokef

Tefillah text and commentary taken from the Koren Sacks Rosh Hashanah Machzor

וְנִתְּנָה תְּקֵף קִדְשֵׁי הַיּוֹם / כִּי הוּא נוֹרָא וְאִים
וְבוֹ תִּנְשֵׂא מַלְכוּתְךָ / וְיִכּוֹן בְּחֶסֶד כְּסָדְךָ / וְתִשָּׁב עָלָיו בְּאַמֶּת.
אַמֶּת, כִּי אַתָּה הוּא דִין וּמוֹכֵית, וְיִוָּדַע וְעֵד
וְכוֹתֵב וְחוֹתֵם וְסוֹפֵר וּמוֹנֵה
וְתוֹפֵר כָּל הַנִּשְׁכָּחוֹת / וְתִפְתַּח אֶת סֵפֶר הַזְכוּרוֹת
וַיֵּאֱלִיו יִקְרָא / וְחוֹתֵם יָד כָּל אָדָם בּוֹ.

וּבְשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל יִתְקַע / וְקוֹל דְּמָמָה דָּקָה יִשְׁמַע
וּמִלְאָכִים יִחְפְּזוּן / וְחִיל וְרַעְדָּה יֵאֱחָזוּן
וַיֹּאמְרוּ, הִנֵּה יוֹם הַדִּין / לִפְקוֹד עַל צָבָא מְרוֹם בְּדִין
כִּי לֹא יִזְכּוּ בְּעֵינֶיךָ בְּדִין
וְכָל בָּאֵי עוֹלָם יַעֲבִירוּן לִפְנֶיךָ כְּבָנֵי מְרוֹן.

כְּבִקְרַת רוּעָה עֹדְרוֹ / מַעֲבִיר צֹאנוֹ תַּחַת שִׁבְטוֹ
כֵּן תַּעֲבִיר וְתִסְפֹּר וְתִמְנֶה / וְתִפְקֹד נַפְשׁ כָּל חַי
וְתִתְּתֶךָ קֶצֶבָה לְכָל בְּרִיָּה / וְתִכְתֹּב אֶת גְּזֵר דֵּינָם.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יִכְתְּבוּן / וּבַיּוֹם צוֹם כְּפֹר יִחַתְמוּן.
כֶּמֶה יַעֲבִירוּן וְכֶמֶה יִבְרָאוּן
מִי יִחְיֶה וּמִי יָמוּת / מִי בִקְצוֹ וּמִי לֹא בִקְצוֹ
מִי בַמַּיִם וּמִי בָאֵשׁ / מִי בַחֲרִיב וּמִי בַחֲיָה / מִי בְרָעַב וּמִי בַצָּמָא
מִי בְרָעַשׁ וּמִי בַמִּגָּפָה / מִי בַחֲנִיקָה וּמִי בַסִּקְלָה.
מִי יָנוּחַ וּמִי יָנוּעַ / מִי יִשְׁקֵט וּמִי יִטָּרֵף
מִי יִשְׁלֹוּ וּמִי יִתִּיֶסֶר / מִי יַעֲנֶה וּמִי יַעֲשִׂיר / מִי יִשְׁפֹּל וּמִי יָרוּם.

וְנִתְּנָה תְּקֵף Let us voice the power of this day's sanctity –
it is awesome, terrible;
on this day Your kingship is raised, Your throne is founded upon love,
and You, with truth, sit upon it.
In truth, it is You: Judge and Accuser, Knowing One and Witness,
writing and sealing, counting, numbering,
remembering all forgotten things,
You open the book of memories –
it is read of itself, / and every man's name is signed there.

וּבְשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל A great shofar sounds,
and a still small voice is heard,
angels rush forward / and are held by trembling, shaking;
they say, "Here is the Day of Judgment
visiting all the heavenly host for judgment –"
for they are not cleared in Your eyes in judgment.
And all who have come into this world pass before You like sheep.

כְּבִקְרַת רוּעָה As a shepherd's searching gaze meets his flock,
as he passes every sheep beneath his rod, so You too pass Yours,
count and number, and regard the soul of every living thing;
and You rule off the limit of each creation's life,
and write down the verdict for each.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה On Rosh Hashanah it is written / and on Yom Kippur it is
sealed: / how many will pass away and how many will be born; / who
will live and who will die; / who in his due time and who before; /
who by water and who by fire; / who by sword and who by beast; /
who of hunger and who of thirst; / who by earthquake and who by
plague; / who by strangling and who by stoning; / who will rest and
who will wander; / who will be calm and who will be harassed; /
who will be at ease and who will suffer; / who will become poor and
who will grow rich; / who cast down and who raised high.

וְתִשׁוּבָה וְתַפְּלָה וְצַדִּיקָה / מַעֲבִירוּן אֶת רֹעַ הַגְּזֵרָה.

FASTING

CRYING

GIVING

But REPENTANCE, PRAYER and CHARITY
avert the evil of the decree.

כִּי כְשִׁמְךָ כֵּן תְּהִלָּתְךָ / קִשָּׁה לְבָעֵם וְנוֹחַ לְרִצּוֹת
כִּי לֹא תַחְפֹּץ בְּמוֹת הַמֵּת / כִּי אִם בְּשׁוּבוֹ מִדְּרָכּוֹ, וְחַיָּה
וְעַד יוֹם מוֹתוֹ תַּחֲכֶה לוֹ / אִם יָשׁוּב, מִיָּד תִּקְבְּלוֹ.
אַמֶּת, כִּי אַתָּה הוּא יוֹצֵר / וְיִוָּדַע יִצָּר / כִּי הֵם בֶּשָׂר וָדָם.

אָדָם יְסוֹדוֹ מֵעָפָר / וְסוֹפוֹ לְעָפָר
בִּנְפֹשׁוֹ יָבִיא לְחֵמוֹ / מִשּׁוֹל בְּחֶרֶם הַנִּשְׁבָּר
בְּחִצֵּי יָבֵשׁ, וּבְחִצֵּי נוֹיָל / בְּצֵל עוֹבֵר, וּבְעָנַן כְּלָה
וּבְרוּחַ נוֹשֶׁבֶת, וּבְאָבָק פּוֹרֵחַ, וּבְחָלוֹם יַעוּף.

וְאַתָּה הוּא מֶלֶךְ, אֵל חַי וְקַיִם.

כִּי כְשִׁמְךָ For as Your name is, so is Your renown:
hard to anger, and readily appeased.
For You do not desire the condemned man's death,
but that he may come back from his ways, and live.
To the very day he dies, You wait for him;
and if he comes back: You welcome him at once.
Truly, it was You who formed them,
You know the forces moving them: / they are but flesh and blood.
Man is founded in dust / and ends in dust.
He lays down his soul to bring home bread. / He is like a broken shard,
like grass dried up, like a faded flower,
like a fleeting shadow, like a passing cloud,
like a breath of wind, like whirling dust, like a dream that slips away.

AND YOU ARE KING –
THE LIVING, EVERLASTING GOD.

Background to the Tefillah

No prayer more powerfully defines the image of the Days of Awe than does *Unetaneh Tokef*. The language is simple, the imagery strong, the rhythms insistent and the drama intense.

We do not know exactly who composed *Unetaneh Tokef* or when. A famous tradition dates it to the time when Jews in northern Europe were suffering brutal Christian persecution. It tells of Rabbi Amnon of Mainz, how he was pressured by the bishop, who was also mayor of the town, to convert. Eventually, after repeated prevarication, the bishop subjected him to cruel punishment, inflicting on him wounds from which he would die. On Rosh Hashanah, sensing that he was on the verge of death, Rabbi Amnon asked to be carried to the synagogue. As he entered he found the congregation about to say the *Kedushah*, and asked for permission to say a prayer as his dying words. He then said *Unetaneh Tokef*, and died (*Or Zarua* 2:276).

The discovery of ancient manuscripts in the Cairo Geniza suggests, however, that the prayer may be older than this. This and other factors suggest that, in its original form, it was composed in Israel several centuries before.

Analysis

It is structured in four movements.

The first sets the scene. The heavenly court is assembled. God sits in the seat of judgment. The angels tremble. Before Him is the book of all our deeds. In it our lives are written, bearing our signature, and we await the verdict.

The second defines what is at stake: Who will live, who will die? Who will flourish, who will suffer, who will be at ease, who will be in torment? Between now and Yom Kippur our fate is being decided on high.

The third is the great outburst of faith that defines Judaism as a religion of hope. No fate is final. Repentance, prayer and charity can avert the evil decree. Life is not a script written by Aeschylus or Sophocles in which tragedy is inexorable. God forgives; God pardons; God exercises clemency – if we truly repent and pray and give to others.

The fourth is a moving reflection on the fragility of human life and the eternity of God. We are no more than a fragment of pottery, a blade of grass, a flower that fades, a shadow, a cloud, a breath of wind. Dust we are and to dust we return. But God is life forever.



Points to Ponder

1 What are the core themes of Rosh Hashanah found in the text of this tefillah?

2 Why is it *teshuvah*, *tefillah* and *tzedakah* that can avert God's evil decree?

3 Do you think this is primarily a prayer of hope or despair?

Rosh Hashanah for the Young (and Young at Heart!)

Top Ten Rosh Hashanah Facts

- 1.** Rosh Hashanah is the anniversary of the creation of the world!
- 2.** The name of the festival in the Torah is not Rosh Hashanah, but rather Yom Teruah (the Day of Blasting). The name Rosh Hashanah comes from the Mishnah.
- 3.** There are actually four New Years mentioned in the Mishnah: the new year for trees (15th of Shvat); the new year for tithes (1st of Ellul); the new year for counting the reign of the king and for counting the months of the calendar (1st of Nissan); and the new year for years (1st of Tishrei).
- 4.** Rosh Hashanah is the only festival that is always two days long, even in Israel.
- 5.** We blow the shofar 100 times on each day of Rosh Hashanah (unless it is Shabbat).
- 6.** The shofar is generally a ram's horn (although it can be from other animals) to remind us of the ram that was caught in a bush

that Avraham used as a sacrifice in place of his son Yitzchak.

7. There are various symbolic foods we eat on the evening of Rosh Hashanah, called *simanim*, each one representing a blessing we hope for the new year. The best-known example is apple dipped in honey for a sweet new year!

8. The traditional Rosh Hashanah greeting is *Leshanah tovah tikatev vetichatem*; (May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year).

9. Many people have the custom to do *tashlich* on the first afternoon of Rosh Hashanah (unless this falls on Shabbat in which case we move to the second day). This involves saying a special prayer and symbolically casting away our sins at a body of fresh water (some people throw bread crumbs into the water to represent the casting away of the sins).

10. There is a custom not to sleep during the day of Rosh Hashanah so we start the year as we mean to go on by utilising every minute we have.



It Once Happened on Rosh Hashanah...



Once it happened in the days of Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaKohen Kook, the Chief Rabbi of pre-State Israel, that a group of workers, under pressure to complete a building in one of the neighbourhoods of Jerusalem, worked on Rosh Hashanah.

People living in the area sent word to Rav Kook, expecting him to order them immediately to stop. Instead he sent a representative to blow shofar for the workers.

They stopped working to listen. Some began to cry. When the blowing was completed, they decided of their own accord not to continue working on the holy day. Some ran home, changed their clothes, and joined Rav Kook at his yeshiva for the rest of Rosh Hashanah.

Points to Ponder

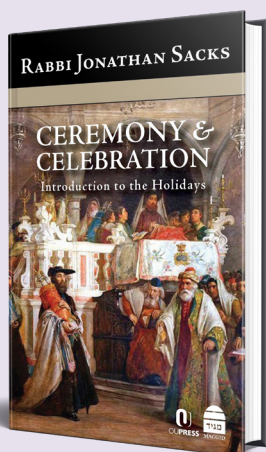
1 Why do you think Rav Kook chose to approach these workers in this way rather than ordering them to stop working?

2 Why do you think the shofar had this impact on the workers?

3 What Rosh Hashanah lessons can we learn from this story?

Chidon on the Chag (A Quick Quiz)

1. What does Rosh Hashanah mean?
2. What date is Rosh Hashanah?
3. How many names does Rosh Hashanah have?
4. What are the names of the three kinds of notes we blow on the shofar?
5. How many notes do we blow on the shofar on each day of Rosh Hashanah?
6. Name five of the *simanim* (symbolic foods) we eat on Rosh Hashanah evening.
7. Why do we eat pomegranates on Rosh Hashanah?
8. What kind of water is necessary to do *tashlich* on Rosh Hashanah?
9. What are the three sections of the Rosh Hashanah Musaf amidah?
10. Why do we have the custom to eat a new fruit on the second night of Rosh Hashanah?



Ceremony & Celebration: Introduction to the Holidays

Bringing together Rabbi Sacks' acclaimed introductions to the Koren Sacks Machzorim, *Ceremony & Celebration* reveals the stunning interplay of biblical laws, rabbinic edicts, liturgical themes, communal rituals and profound religious meaning of each of the five central Jewish holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Succot, Pesach and Shavuot.

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Educational Companion to the Questions

ROSH HASHANAH IN A NUTSHELL

1. Anyone who wishes to live a life with meaning will find themselves asking these or similar questions. A thinking and reflective person will address them more often than once a year. Rosh Hashanah ensures that even someone for whom introspection does not come naturally will still address these questions, and consider the answers to them, every year on the day that encourages the process of *Cheshbon Haneefesh* (self-accounting/introspection) when we stand in the presence of God and consider our lives.
2. The fleeting nature of life can lead to depression and a sense of nihilism and emptiness, or conversely it can inspire a search for meaning, and an aspiration to make every minute and every day count. Rosh Hashanah and Judaism in general encourages the second approach.
3. From a young child to an elderly person, these questions are the basic questions of a self-aware being who aspires to the betterment of their life. This is a natural wish even in young children. Having an adult to guide them in the asking and answering of these questions will be a good catalyst to the process.

DEEP DIVING INTO THE TEFILLAH OF THE DAY

1. From the list of ten themes found above in “What Rosh Hashanah Says to Us” the following are clearly expressed in this *tefillah*: Life is short; life is a gift from God; we are free to act; life is not easy; we are dust of the earth but within us is the breath of God. Further Rosh Hashanah themes also found here are: the awesome nature of the day; God as King; God as a Judge and Rosh Hashanah as a Day of Judgement; the power of the sound of the shofar; our future is in the balance and decided on this day; we can still affect the decision through acts of *teshuvah*, *tefillah*, and *tzedakah*; God is a forgiving God.
2. These three signify the best acts to repair the three paradigm relationships a person can have: with ourselves (*Teshuvah* – repentance); with God (*Tefillah* – prayer); and with other humans (*Tzedakah* – charity). These are the three areas we need to focus on improving.
3. While there are aspects of despair found in the prayer (such as the vulnerability and fleeting nature of human life) at its core there is a profound statement of hope and positivity. It declares that our fate is ultimately within our control, that we have the secret to averting the evil decree, and God is a forgiving God.

IT ONCE HAPPENED ON ROSH HASHANAH...

1. Rav Kook was famous for his love of all Jews. Rather than showing disapproval for their decision to work on Rosh Hashanah, which may have alienated them further from Judaism, he offered them the chance to hear the shofar at their workplace. He showed he cared and this approach ultimately brought them closer to Judaism.
2. The sound of the shofar is a powerful sound that reflects the emotions of the soul. Perhaps the workers tapped into its spiritual dimension, and it touched their souls. Or perhaps it was a familiar sound from their youth and it spoke to them once more and woke them from their haze of the pressures of adult life. Or perhaps it represented the love of Rav Kook for his fellow Jew and it was this that moved them.
3. The power of the sound of the shofar, if we are only open to hearing it. The power of acts of love and kindness, more important even than *teshuvah* and repairing our relationship with God. Fixing our human relationships come first.

CHIDON ON THE CHAG (A QUICK QUIZ)

1. Head of the Year (not New Year!)
2. 1st and 2nd of Tishrei.
3. Five: *Rosh Hashanah*; *Yom Teruah* (Day of Blasting); *Yom Hadin* (Day of Judgement); *Yom Hazikaron* (Day of Remembrance); *Hayom Harat Olam* (the Day of the Creation of the World).
4. *Tekiah*; *Shevarim*; *Teruah*.
5. 100.
6. Apple and honey; dates; pomegranates; carrots; leeks; beet-roots; squash/gourds; fish; and the head of a fish or sheep. Other families may have additional traditions.
7. Because the many seeds are meant to represent the 613 mitzvot in the Torah.
8. “Flowing water”, preferably a stream with fish.
9. *Malchuyot* (kingship); *Zichronot* (remembrances); *Shofarot* (shofar blasts).
10. Because there is a difference of opinion whether the second day of Rosh Hashanah is a new festival or a continuation of the first day, we eat a fruit that we have not eaten for 30 days so that we can make a *shehecheyanu* blessing to cover both the fruit and, if needed, the new festival of the second day.

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